

In the Kitchen

How to Conserve Your Energy

Planning and organizing

- Keep often-used items within easy reach.
- Store dishes that go in the dishwasher close to the dishwasher.
- Use cupboard organizers such as lazy Susans, pull-out shelves, lid organizers, etc.
- Plan meals and go shopping for the whole week. This way, you will have needed supplies on hand.
- Buy from a store or service that will deliver groceries to your home.
- Look for shortcuts. Buy microwave meals, “instant” foods, boil-in-bag meals, pre-cut and washed vegetables and frozen cookie dough.
- Spread out your work so you don’t get too tired. Make parts of a meal ahead of time, such as earlier in the day when you have more energy.
- Gather your supplies and ingredients first, and then sit to work at a table or counter. You may want to use a high stool to sit at the counter.
- Plan to make enough food for a meal, plus extra to freeze.

Carrying

- Slide heavy items along the counter rather than lifting them.
- Use a cart or walker basket to carry things.
- Store needed items where you use them. For example, if you make coffee every day, keep the coffee maker, coffee and cups all in one place.

Cooking

- **If you have an oxygen tank:** Never cook with a gas stove when using oxygen. Keep the tank at least 10 feet away from the stove.
- Use electric appliances when possible (mixer, can opener, food processor).
- Use oven mitts instead of hot pads. These will protect you better if you lose your balance.
- Use a slotted spoon or colander to remove vegetables or pasta from hot water. Empty the water from the pan after it has cooled.
- To keep bowls stable, place them on a non-slip pad or a wet cloth.

Serving

- Dish the food onto your plate, so you don't have to lift serving bowls.
- Choose lightweight dinnerware, pots, pans and bowls. Think about buying containers that can be used for many purposes (mixing, storing, cooking and freezing).
- Serve several foods on the same plate. This will reduce the number of dishes used.
- Use paper plates and cups as needed.

Cleaning up

- Rest after your meal before cleaning up.
- Find ways to reduce your work, such as soaking and air-drying dishes. If you don't have too many dishes to wash, you might save them up and wash them once a day.
- Sit on a high stool to wash dishes. You can open the cupboard below the sink for more legroom (but be careful of hot pipes).
- Sit on a chair to unload the dishwasher. Stack the dishes on the counter. Then, stand and slide the items to where they are stored.